

C I T Y P L A N N I N G C O M M I S S I O N M I N U T E S

O C T O B E R 2, 2 0 0 3

The regular meeting of the City Planning Commission convened Thursday, October 2, 2003, at 1:38pm in the City Council Chambers, 333 W. Ocean Boulevard.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS: Nick Sramek, Charles Greenberg
Morton Stuhlbarg, Charles Winn,
Matthew Jenkins

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS: Randal Hernandez, Lynn Moyer

CHAIRMAN: Nick Sramek

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Fady Mattar, Director
Greg Carpenter, Zoning Officer
Angela Reynolds, Advance Planning
Lynette Ferenczy, Planner IV
Joe Recker, Planner I

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Mais, Deputy City Attorney
Marcia Gold, Minutes Clerk

Chairman Sramek welcomed new Planning Commissioner Matthew Jenkins.

P L E D G E O F A L L E G I A N C E
Commissioner Winn led the pledge of allegiance.

M I N U T E S

The minutes of August 21, 2003 were approved on a motion by Commissioner Winn, seconded by Commissioner Greenberg and passed 3-0-1. Commissioner Stuhlbarg abstained, and Commissioner Jenkins did not vote. Commissioners Hernandez and Moyer were absent.

The minutes of September 4, 2003 were approved on a motion by Commissioner Greenberg, seconded by Commissioner Stuhlbarg and passed 3-0-1. Commissioner Winn abstained, and Commissioner Jenkins did not vote. Commissioners Hernandez and Moyer were absent.

S W E A R I N G O F W I T N E S S E S

C O N S E N T C A L E N D A R

At the request of Chairman Sramek, Item 1C was removed to the Regular Agenda for discussion. Greg Carpenter noted that staff had distributed recommended revised conditions to Items 1A and 1C.

Items 1A and 1B of the Consent Calendar were approved on a motion by Commissioner Winn, seconded by Commissioner Jenkins and passed 5-0. Commissioners Hernandez and Moyer were absent.

1A. Case No. 0307-27, Tentative Parcel Map, CE 03-153

Applicant: Linda Bozung & Piper Rudnick
Subject Site: 6700 Cherry Avenue (Council District 9)
Description: Tentative Parcel Map No. 24722 to subdivide an existing shopping center into four lots.

Approved tentative Parcel Map No. 24722, subject to requirements, exceptions and amendments.

1B. Case No. 0308-19, Conditional Use Permit

Applicant: Kathleen Shanahan
Subject Site: 1429 Clark Avenue (Council District 4)
Description: Request to operate a therapeutic inclusive preschool at an existing church in the R-4-R Zone District.

Approved the Conditional Use Permit, subject to conditions.

1C. Case No. 0308-06, Site Plan Review, Local Coastal Development Permit, Standards Variance, Vesting Tentative Tract Map, CE 03-155

Applicant: Morton & Susan Stuhlbarg
 c/o Bozena Jaworski of RPP Architects
Subject Site: 1700 Bluff Place (Council District 2)
Description: A request for a modification of an approved Local Coastal Development Permit, Standards Variance and Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 53925 to construct a new five-story, two-unit condominium with the following code exceptions: A 6'0'' front yard setback from Bluff Place (instead of 8'0''); a side yard setback of 5'6'' from 11th Place (instead of 8'0''); a 29'6'' wide curb cut (instead of not more than 20'0''); a garage setback of 10'0'' to 12'0'' (instead of 20'0''); projections into the side yard setback for open stairs, elevator and balcony (instead of

no projections), and a request to not terrace the first three floors of the building.

Removed to the Regular Agenda.

R E G U L A R A G E N D A

1C. Case No. 0308-06, Site Plan Review, Local Coastal Development Permit, Standards Variance, Vesting Tentative Tract Map, CE 03-155

Applicant: Morton & Susan Stuhlbarg
 c/o Bozena Jaworski of RPP Architects
Subject Site: 1700 Bluff Place (Council District 2)
Description: A request for a modification of an approved Local Coastal Development Permit, Standards Variance and Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 53925 to construct a new five-story, two-unit condominium with the following code exceptions: A 6'0'' front yard setback from Bluff Place (instead of 8'0''); a side yard setback of 5'6'' from 11th Place (instead of 8'0''); a 29'6'' wide curb cut (instead of not more than 20'0''); a garage setback of 10'0'' to 12'0'' (instead of 20'0''); projections into the side yard setback for open stairs, elevator and balcony (instead of no projections), and a request to not terrace the first three floors of the building.

Lynette Ferenczy presented the staff report recommending approval of the applications, since the subdivision was consistent with the Local Coastal Development Plan and the Land Use Element; since positive findings could be made to grant certain variances given the unique size and slope of the lot; and because the proposed project was reduced in size from the original one. Ms. Ferenczy also noted that three letters of opposition had been received, and that one letter in support of the project had been received from the Alamitos Bay Neighborhood Association.

Bozena Jaworski, RPP Architects, 1700 Bluff Place, stated they were in agreement with the conditions of approval.

Bob Bittle, 1616 E. Ocean Blvd., #11, nearby resident, said he was generally in support of the project, but thought it should conform to existing standards because he did not feel there was any hardship attached to the configuration of the lot.

Commissioner Greenberg noted that the original project had

already been approved with the same variances, but it had been a story taller and one unit bigger.

Jim Sobelewski, 1750 E. Ocean, neighbor, spoke against the project, saying he thought it would aggravate existing parking problems and create a potential safety hazard.

Diana Mann, 621 Minella Avenue, also spoke in opposition, saying she thought the site was supposed to be a park.

Rob Bellevue, 6018 East Bayview Walk, spoke in support of the project, noting that it would not take away any parking spaces.

Ms. Jaworski added that the project as redesigned had far less impact on the community, and would be providing sufficient onsite parking for residents and visitors.

In response to a query from Commissioner Greenberg, Mr. Carpenter stated that although the lot had never been City property, it had served as a parking lot for the adjacent building. However, these parking spaces have been relocated to the north side of Bluff Place, leaving this lot available for development and that due to its proximity to the bluffs, the applicant had to provide funds for offsite beach access improvements.

Commissioner Greenberg said he didn't understand the objections to the current project because it was much smaller than the previous proposal that had been granted with the same variances.

Commissioner Greenberg moved to approve the modification of the Local Coastal Development Permit, Vesting Tentative Tract Map and Standards Variance, subject to conditions amended by staff.

Commissioner Winn agreed that the variances were minor, and cited the Alamitos Bay Association's support of the project.

Commissioner Winn then seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-2. Commissioners Stuhlbarg and Jenkins abstained due to conflict of interest, and Commissioners Hernandez and Moyer were absent.

The following item was taken out of order:

3. Case No. 0306-17, Administrative Use Permit, ND 19-03

Applicant: 3777 + Partners, L.P.
Subject Site: 3777 Long Beach Blvd., Council District 8

Description: Request to establish an Institutional Use (Westwood College) and a joint-use parking program in the CCA Zone.

Joe Recker presented the staff report recommending approval of the project since it was not anticipated to cause adverse effects on the adjacent neighborhood; satisfied parking requirements and standards, would reuse a vacant office building to contribute towards area revitalization; and because the proposed site was located along a major arterial with nearby freeway access thereby reducing local traffic impact.

Commissioner Winn stated that he understood the concerns of the surrounding community, but thought that the conditions of approval addressed potential impacts, and was mainly concerned about potential jaywalking. Mr. Recker said that the Traffic Engineer felt that signage and the location of the crosswalk would mitigate any jaywalking problems.

Martin Howard, 5421 El Parque, applicant, stated that they were in agreement with all conditions of approval except the one regarding hours of operation, since they needed to stay open until 11pm to be financially viable.

Vicky Bowles, 3901 Via Oro, school's executive director, explained that the long hours of operation covered both the day and night students, and that they had no loitering or other problems with those hours in their current location. Mr. Recker added that specific limits were conditioned as to the number of students allowed during the day and night sessions.

Jill Shepard, 3777 Long Beach Blvd., Director of Real Estate for Alta Colleges, said she understood the limits on number of students to address the traffic issue.

Andy Perez, 3718 N. Weston Place, read his letter in opposition to the project on the grounds that it would create parking, littering and safety problems for the neighborhood.

John Deats, 3600 Pacific Avenue, reviewed specific items from the staff report and stated he did not feel that positive findings could be made to support the staff recommendation.

Richard Ivey, 242 E. Bixby Road, neighbor, noted that when the building was in use before, parking was negatively impacted all over the area. Mr. Ivey also said the students would loiter on

neighborhood lawns during breaks, and that he did not feel the break area as designed would be adequate.

In response to a query from Commissioner Greenberg asking if he would prefer a five-story office use, Mr. Ivey stated that the main concern was that a school use would be more intense, and impact neighborhood safety, especially at night, unlike an office building.

Paul Crawford, 3734 Pacific Avenue, also spoke in opposition to the school use, expressing concern for the street safety of area children going to and from school, since the college hours were similar.

Mike Kowal, 3756 Pine, Los Cerritos, member, Los Cerritos Improvement Association, said he had collected 200 letters of opposition to the project on the grounds that the college use would negatively impact the area's quality of life in many ways.

In response to a query from Commissioner Greenberg, Mr. Kowal said that there were already jaywalking problems with the lower-impact technical college on site now.

Elizabeth Vorella, 3829 Pacific Avenue, also spoke against the project, agreeing that it would create safety hazards for area children, and that an office use would have less impact.

Martin Bell, 4211 Pine Avenue, said he was in favor of the project since it would help diminish the run-down look of the area. Mr. Bell added that he would like to see a different use of the building, but that there had not been a lot of interest in the space.

Terry Smiley, 3834 Country Club Drive, said he was opposed to the college use because other area colleges always had crowds of loitering students around the streets. Mr. Smiley added that the neighborhood seemed unanimously opposed to the project and would prefer a vacant building to a problematic use.

Commissioner Winn said he thought the required residential parking permits would help address parking impacts.

Gary Hamrick, 47 La Linda, adjacent neighbor, noted that the two hour residential parking limit expired at 5pm, and although he appreciated the renovation of the site and the community outreach efforts, he thought there would still be overwhelming

traffic, parking and safety problems with the large amounts of students entering and exiting the facility at the same time.

Larry Tidball, 3826 Weston Place, presented a letter in opposition to the project, citing noise impacts, inefficient parking configurations and underestimation of parking use by staff.

Barbara Tidball, 3826 Weston Place, also spoke against the project, saying that on similar area campuses, there was much student loitering and noise from food trucks.

Doug Limkeman, 3925 Pine, also spoke against the project, saying the transient student population would create negative impacts on the neighbors.

Steve Hyde, 3853 Weston Place, agreed with the previous speakers.

Commissioner Winn said that although the City was pro-business, he understood the neighborhood concerns as well as the building owner's quandary of a single vs. a multi-tenant use. Mr. Winn added that there would be left-turn queuing into the single-entrance parking lot, plus a line to turn left on the east side egress, and that overall, he did not feel this was the right use for the site, which he thought should remain as an office building.

Commissioner Winn moved to deny the resolution certifying MND 19-03, and to deny the Administrative Use Permits for the establishment of a technical college and joint-use parking program.

Commissioner Greenberg said he had arrived at the same conclusion, since he would always go with the neighborhood's desire unless the use being proposed was a citywide asset, in which case it would be value vs. impact. Mr. Greenberg added that the college was a wonderful institution, and hoped it would find a good home elsewhere in Long Beach.

Commissioner Greenberg seconded the motion.

Chairman Sramek commented that it was a great facility, but that there would be too many traffic and parking issues affecting the quality of life in the area.

The question was called, and the motion passed 4-0-1, with Commissioner Jenkins abstaining. Commissioners Hernandez and Moyer were absent.

C O N T I N U E D I T E M S

2. PRESENTATION

Subject Site: Citywide

Description: Presentation of Converta Belle Housing
concept and consideration of potential Zoning Amendments

Alex Bellehumeur presented more details about his concept for the construction of dwellings and condominium structures that could be converted from one unit to two units over time to address housing needs and ownership opportunities.

Mr. Bellehumeur described the concessions that would be necessary in order to make this concept work, including increased density and reduced parking. He noted that market forces would dictate who would buy the units, but that they had to be deed-restricted to qualify for the density bonus. Mr. Bellehumeur stated that if the project was approved with deed restricted units, they would need additional funds for monitoring and enforcing owner usage.

In response to a query from Chairman Sramek, Mr. Bellehumeur stated that the funding would be primarily private to encourage developers who generally avoid government funding since it tends to increase time and cost of projects. He added that he did not think the deed restriction aspect would be a deal breaker, since he thought that was traditionally a part of this type of housing.

Chairman Sramek suggested that a prototype be developed and presented as soon as possible to the area PACs, at which point deed restriction and zoning details could be worked out.

In response to a query from Commissioner Winn as to whether or not the units could be built without the deed restrictions, Mr. Bellehumeur stated that they could, in non-redevelompent districts, for single-family ownership.

Commissioner Jenkins stated that he supported the concept, and suggested that the concept be put out to the general public for input.

Mr. Carpenter stated that the staff had serious concerns about the concept, since it was a drastic change from how multiple family housing proposals were usually handled, and since it would allow much denser housing while reducing parking and open space, leading to negative impacts on neighborhoods. He asked that the Commission consider the overall benefit to the City, and how the system could be guaranteed to work as designed, plus when and where it should be allowed.

Fady Mattar pointed out that if the maximum number of units were used as a standard instead of the minimum, it would alleviate monitoring issues.

Commissioner Greenberg asked if the density bonus was given on the assumption of the maximum or minimum number of units, and Mr. Bellehumeur stated that he felt many of the low-income residents wouldn't even own a car, so they would not create as much of an impact. Commissioner Greenberg said he thought enforcement of proof of residence would be problematic, and that presenting the concept only without an actual demonstration site would be a waste of time.

John Deats, 3600 Pacific, said he felt it was an intriguing concept that needed to be explored and exposed to the homeowners' associations.

Jack Smith, Wrigley Association, 2453 Golden Avenue, agreed that homeowners' associations would want to know how this type of zoning and housing applied to them, and how it would affect their quality of life.

Mr. Carpenter said that staff would work with the applicant to develop a prototypical plan for both the single- and multi-family concepts, prepare an analysis and schedule of community presentations, and bring it back to the Commission.

M A T T E R S F R O M T H E A U D I E N C E

There were no matters from the audience.

M A T T E R S F R O M T H E D E P A R T M E N T O F P L A N N I N G A N D B U I L D I N G

There were no matters from the Department of Planning and Building.

**M A T T E R S F R O M T H E P L A N N I N G
C O M M I S S I O N - Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Commissioner Greenberg was appointed as Chairman of the Planning Commission on a motion by Commissioner Winn, seconded the Commissioner Stuhlbarg and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Hernandez was appointed as Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission on a motion by Commissioner Greenberg, seconded by Commissioner Winn and passed unanimously.

A D J O U R N

The meeting adjourned at 5:22pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Gold
Minutes Clerk